

1 My message is not to tell you to close
2 casinos. My message is perhaps to tell you that there
3 is hope out there. Perhaps we can publicize it.
4 Perhaps we can teach it. Perhaps we can make people
5 aware.

6 I was one of the fortunate ones, very
7 fortunate, and I know I have to close now.

8 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you, Harvey.

9 HARVEY G.: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Michael S.

11 MICHAEL S.: Yes. Good evening. My name
12 is Michael S., and I am a compulsive gambler, and I
13 made my last bet on September 5th of 1994, and I'm
14 going to say what's been said already. I am not for
15 or against the casinos. I do not want to see them
16 shut down.

17 People can gamble normally. I cannot, and
18 I'm going to tell a little tale, and this is a tale
19 about a 14 year old boy that entered Atlantic City and
20 stood in front of the Playboy Casino and stood in
21 front of the glass and watched his grandparents
22 gamble, and from that moment on, that's all he wanted

1 for the rest of his life.

2 And the tale gets so interesting and so
3 great that when he was 15, he became a regular at the
4 casinos, and people say, "How did you get in and how
5 did you do this and how did you do that? Where did
6 the money come from?"

7 Well, it's a very simple story. I stole
8 it. I conned it. I took anything I could.

9 My mother wore a wedding ring on her
10 finger. I took it off and sold it so that I may
11 gamble. My parents had key locks on every door in
12 their house because their son was a thief. They could
13 not allow him into anything that wasn't nailed down.

14 The story gets better. By 17, I'm in the
15 casinos three and four nights a week. School means
16 nothing to me at this point. I barely graduate. All
17 I wanted to do was gamble.

18 And then I graduated to a new level of
19 getting money, not by working, by conning and
20 cheating, robbing prostitutes on Atlantic Avenue,
21 taking them back to the rooms that I was getting
22 comped at 17 years old in these wonderful casinos.

1 Okay?

2 Ending up in jail by 19 for credit card
3 fraud, for bank fraud. By 21 attempting suicide,
4 waking up in a hotel -- in a hospital four days later,
5 and the doctor says to me, "I have no idea how you
6 lived through this. You took a bottle of pills at
7 nine o'clock at night. We found you at ten o'clock
8 the next morning. We have no idea."

9 But then remarkably, on September 5th in
10 1994, I decided to give Gamblers Anonymous one more
11 chance. I decided that maybe I did deserve a life,
12 and that's what I did, and I haven't made a bet since
13 then.

14 And my live has meaning today, and I have
15 some of the greatest things. I heard somebody say
16 that they work at the casino and they just bought a
17 house. Well, I make settlement on my house in two
18 weeks, something I never thought I'd ever be able to
19 do.

20 What a great life I have. I have a
21 wonderful wife, three great children, and I have that
22 because I don't gamble. I don't tell my wife not to

1 gamble. I don't tell others, but all I say is if it
2 wasn't for the efforts of Gamblers Anonymous, for
3 rehab. centers, and the Council on Compulsive Gambling
4 in this and other states, I would not be alive today,
5 and that's all I have.

6 Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you.

8 Isaac Stanley.

9 MR. STANLEY: Good evening.

10 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Good evening.

11 MR. STANLEY: My name is Isaac Stanley,
12 and first of all, I'd like to thank the members of the
13 Commission for being here this evening and for
14 allowing me to speak.

15 As a consultant and adjunct instructor at
16 Jersey City College in Jersey City, New Jersey, I've
17 had the opportunity to teach a course about compulsive
18 gambling to a number of prospective New Jersey
19 certified drug and addiction counselors as part of
20 their certification requirements here in the State of
21 New Jersey.

22 The purpose of this eight hour course is